

a lump on her breast. Within weeks she had it and some lymph nodes removed. So far so good, until it came to the follow-up therapy.

Mrs. Magee, a 55-year-old public school secretary, researched her condition on the Internet, and read that optimally, radiation treatment should begin two weeks after surgery. But the local provincial government clearinghouse that manages the waiting time for radiation therapy told her she had to wait until the end of September—nearly three months after her surgery—to begin treatment.

"I was supposed to feel lucky I got in so quickly," said Mrs. Magee, still viscerally annoyed though she has since successfully completed her radiation regime. "It's a horrible feeling that something in your body is ticking that you have no control over. If I were a politician's wife I wouldn't have had to wait."

Long heralded for giving all Canadians free health insurance and paying for almost all medical expenses, the health care system founded in the 1960's has long been the third rail all of Canadian politics; not to be touched by private hands, nor altered by Parliament.

But growing complaints about long lines for diagnosis and surgery, as well as widespread line-jumping by the affluent, and connected, are eroding public confidence in Canada's national health care system and producing a leading issue for next year's national elections.

A recent government study indicated that 4.3 million Canadian adults—or 18 percent of those who saw a doctor in 2001—reported they had difficulty seeing a doctor or getting a test or surgery done in a timely fashion. Three million Canadians are unable to find a family physician, according to several private studies, producing a situation all the more serious since it is the family doctor who refers patients to specialists and medical testing.

"The sky isn't falling, but things are not rosy," said Dr. Dana W. Hanson, president of the Canadian Medical Association. "Nevertheless if things are not fixed, the sky may fall."

Canada spends \$86 billion a year on health care—only the United States, Germany and Switzerland spend more as a proportion of total economic output—but budget cutbacks since the early 1990's have impeded efforts to keep health care up to date. A recent report by the Senate's Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology indicates that well over 30 percent of the country's medical imaging devices are obsolete.

Overworked technology is one reason for the long lines; others include a shortage of nurses and inefficient management of hospital and other health care facilities, according to several studies.

Waiting times have also increased because an aging population has put more demands on the system, while the current generation of doctors is working fewer hours than the last.

Waiting can occur at every step of treatment. A study by the conservative Fraser Institute concluded that patients across Canada experienced average waiting times of 16.5 weeks between receiving a referral from a general practitioner and undergoing treatment in 2001-2002, a rate 77 percent longer than in 1993. The recent Senate report noted that waiting times for M.R.I., CT, and ultrasound scans grew by 40 percent since 1994.

"Waiting lists are the hornets' nests that are jeopardizing the system," said Dr. Tirone E. David, professor of surgery at the University of Toronto. He noted that Ontario residents needed to wait an average of two months to see a cardiologist unless it was an

emergency, queries for angiograms took four to six weeks, and waiting times between initial examination and micro-valve repairs could take as long as six months.

"It wasn't that way 15 years ago," Dr. David added. "It does not alter the ultimate outcome, but there's an anguish and uncertainty when a person feels their life is in a holding pattern for up to a year."

Defenders of the Canadian system note that only patients waiting months for non-emergency care, like treatments for cataracts and hernias skew the waiting time statistics.

And they argue that within life expectancy of 78 years, Canadians still enjoy one of the longest life expectancies in the world, slightly higher than the United States where 41 million people have no health insurance.

Still recent polls show that while Canadians want to keep their national system they are worried about its future effectiveness.

"I don't think there's a lot of patience among the public for a lot more study," said Deputy Prime Minister John Manley in a recent interview noting that his own driver needed to wait a year for hip replacement surgery. "There's not a lot of time to deal with it."

In response to the growing concerns, Prime Minister Jean Chretien and the Senate conducted studies of the system, that concluded in recent months that shortages of doctors, nurses and diagnostic equipment had caused at least some deterioration of care over the last 10 years.

Seeking a legacy in his final year in office, Mr. Chretien agreed last week to spend over \$9 billion more over the next three years on programs to improve diagnostic equipment, primary care, drug coverage and home care. But the provincial and territorial premiers say that isn't nearly enough to alleviate shortages of services, particularly in rural areas.

The system's shortfalls have opened the way for tentative but growing moves toward privately managed medical services and user fee in return for quicker service. A hospital in Montreal has begun charging fees for some surgical procedures and renting operating rooms to patients for several hundred dollars an hour. A Vancouver hospital has begun selling full-body C.T. scans for \$860.

In an effort to reduce waiting lists, the provinces of Alberta, Nova Scotia and Ontario have established about 30 private M.R.I. and C.T. clinics, some of which offer nonemergency services to be paid for by private insurance.

"With the system cracking at the edges and waiting lists growing, people will eventually stay 'all right, let me pay," said Dr. Tom McGowan, president of Canadian Radiation Oncology Services, Canada's first for-profit cancer radiation treatment center which has treated nearly 2,000 patients since it opened in Toronto two years ago. (Patients still pay nothing at the radiation clinic; Dr. McGowan is paid by the province and receives bonuses if he surpasses productivity targets.)

The Ontario provincial government allowed Dr. McGowan to open his night clinic after it was forced to send 1,650 cancer patients to the United States for radiation treatments during a 25-month period in 2000 and 2001 because of waiting lists that were up to 16 weeks long.

Dr. McGowan said the emergency, which cost the province \$20 million in travel costs, was not rooted in a shortage of equipment nor staff but inefficient public management. Whatever the reasons his patients are quick to tell horror stories about their waits for diagnostic tests and treatments.

"Your worst fear is it is going to grow while you are waiting," said Pat McMeekin,

a 53-year-old hospital clerical worker, recalling the two months she had to wait between a mammogram and the first of two biopsies confirming she had breast cancer last summer. "When you have something you want to take care of it and be done with it."

TOLERANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I was here on September 11, 2001. I saw the skies filled with mud-brown smoke rising from the devastation at the Pentagon. I felt that anger that every American felt then and that continues to simmer in the lesser angels of our nature to this very hour.

There is in my heartland Indiana district a small mosque in Muncie, Indiana, where each weekend a small community, less than 1,000 people of Arabic descent, gather to practice their religious faith, each of them contributing in important ways in our community. They reached me in the immediate hours after September 11 and expressed to me their concern as family people for their well-being in the wake of this attack that was unanimously effected by Arab extremists against our country.

It was then that I issued a statement I read again today. I said then that the terrorists who attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon are not representative of the overwhelming majority of Arabs or Muslims in the United States, and we could not allow anger at this horrible act to lead us to hate or discriminate against innocent individuals who happened to be of Middle Eastern descent. I said that terror has no regard for religion or ethnicity, and if we attack the innocent simply because of their ethnic status, we are no better than the terrorists who attacked us.

So we come to these days in which we find ourselves again perhaps on the precipice of a war in the Middle East, with the news in our Muncie newspaper this weekend that a recent graduate of Ball State University was arrested on terrorist charges at his home in Idaho. I thought with this news and the potential for war abroad and terrorist attacks at home, it would be appropriate to rise again to remind the people of my district and the State and even of this country that we cannot allow the hatred that terrorists and their sympathizers possess to inflame our hearts and distort our communities.

I urge my fellow citizens to continue to embrace those ideals of the Declaration of Independence, and understand while we believe and have built a Nation founded on the premise that all men are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights, we cannot and must not give voice of persecution or permit acts of discrimination

against those among us of Middle Eastern descent. Millions of Arab Americans, like those in my district, contribute daily in vital ways to our communities and our Nation in every professional class, medicine, academia, engineering, and yes, to the U.S. armed forces.

The Good Book tells us, and what does the Lord require of you? To do justice, to love kindness, to walk humbly with your God. Let us as we go into these difficult times and in the difficult days ahead rededicate ourselves to practice justice and kindness toward every American, citizen and visitor of Middle Eastern descent, that we may hold up those ideals that brave Americans fight to defend in these days.

ALLIED SUPPORT FOR WAR AGAINST IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am confused today. I have been in Congress 17 years and I have been a strong supporter of our relations with our European friends, with parliamentarians from Russia, Ukraine, China, and every other major nation in the world. I have traveled to France and Germany several times, and have hosted scores of members of parliaments.

But what I saw occur last week and what I am hearing coming out of the President's mouth disturbs and confuses me. President Chirac of France and his counterpart, Chancellor Schroeder of Germany, have said that they will not support the U.S. effort to remove Saddam Hussein from Iraq. They have further said there is no justification for war unless it is approved by the U.N. Security Council.

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But I look at each country and I wonder what they are referring to, because it was France just 4 years ago when they wanted the U.S. to come in and assist them militarily in removing Milosevic from power in Belgrade. It was France who came to the U.S. and convinced our President to put our sons and daughters in harm's way. But in doing so, along with the French, in pushing America to fight this military battle, they would not go to the U.N. Security Council because they knew that Russia would veto any resolution.

So what did France and Germany do? Just a few short years ago, for the first time and only time in NATO's history, along with our President, at that time Bill Clinton, they used a NATO military force to invade a non-NATO sovereign nation to remove the head of state, and that head of state was Slobodan Milosevic. Now, Milosevic was a bad guy, a war criminal, he has done bad things, but everyone, includ-

ing the special rapporteur for human rights at the U.N., Max van der Stoep, including Bill Clinton's own Ambassador to the U.N., Ambassador Holbrooke, have all said publicly that, in fact, Saddam Hussein is far worse than Milosevic ever was. In fact, a U.N. special rapporteur said there has been no leader since Adolf Hitler who has done the kinds of human rights abuses that Saddam Hussein has done.

How, then, can France and Germany when just a few short years ago for their own benefit, because a neighbor was threatening in their case, they felt, their security, enticed the U.S. to come in and use our troops to remove Milosevic from power militarily and today say, in a situation far, far worse in Saddam Hussein, that force is not justified?

I am also reminded of just a year ago, President Jacques Chirac, saying it again, the U.N. Security Council is the final group that should decide the change of regimes, sent French troops to the Ivory Coast because of a coup attempt, sent French troops there, without going to the U.N. Security Council, without asking for a vote, without employing the very tactics that he is standing up now and demanding around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I am troubled. The French and Germans have been our longtime friends, and hopefully they will be once this is over; but the words coming out of the mouths of Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schroeder and their foreign ministers leave me confused and bewildered. I really wonder what France stands for. I really wonder what Germany stands for. Are they really against human rights abuses as defined by Amnesty International and every other major human rights group? Are they really convinced that people who are bad actors like Milosevic should be removed from office, as we did with their pushing and support just a few years ago militarily? And if so, why the change with Saddam Hussein? I hope it is not because of the ties to oil that France has with Iraq. I would hope that is not the case with the French. But, Mr. Speaker, I do not know what the proper response is.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD two letters which were sent by me to President Jacques Chirac last Friday and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, also last Friday, which basically lay out the facts and then asks the question of the French and Germans, Do you have a double standard? Is it okay to entice America to come in and fight a battle in front of you in your backyard to remove a leader that you have said publicly is a human rights abuser, even though you do not want to go to the U.N. and did not go to the U.N. to achieve the U.N.'s support? Is it okay to do that and then a few years later, after 12 years of seeing Saddam Hussein kill tens of thousands of innocent people, use chemical weapons against the Kurds, commit war crimes against our own American

POWs, 21 of them, in fact, and, in fact, commit the most horrendous crimes against the Kuwaitis and all the other minority groups inside Iraq, and then to come forward and say, "Well, in this case it's different"?

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, March 7, 2003

President JACQUES CHIRAC,

Republic of France, c/o Embassy of France, Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT CHIRAC: As a long time friend of the French people and a steadfast facilitator of inter-parliamentary cooperation between our nations, I am compelled to contact you to express my disappointment with your government's actions. Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have hosted dozens of French parliamentarians, traveled to your country to speak to government officials and industry leaders, and endeavored to strengthen the relations between our great nations. However, I was outraged today by your Foreign Minister's statements before the United Nations opposing the use of force to uphold the United Nations Charter and the sixteen multilateral resolutions written after the Gulf War cease-fire in 1991. Your government's words and actions have done serious, if not permanent, damage to the once unshakable foundations of the great transatlantic alliance that has served our mutual interests for so long.

Your continued opposition to the use of force to disarm Iraq without the full support of the United Nations is steeped in hypocrisy of such epic proportions, that your sudden reverence for the inviolability of the United Nations is laughable. When the dictator Milosevic threatened western Europe's back door, France was entirely content to bypass the United Nations Security Council and take military action. History will forever judge your use of NATO—championing the organization's first offensive action against a non-member—without any attempt to employ the global diplomacy of the United Nations. The actions of your Foreign Minister opposing the dedication of the United States stands in stark contradiction to the practices and motivations of your government in Yugoslavia. During negotiations within the Security Council amidst the NATO engagement, Alain Dejammet justified France's actions through the enforcement of three resolutions under Chapter VII on Kosovo and Yugoslavia's refusal to fulfill its obligations under those agreements. Your opposition and veto threat sends a disturbing message to future generations that international interference is no longer desired to end genocide, obstruct terrorism or aid a suffering people under a demonic regime. Even more disturbing, is that the efforts to remove the cancer of Slobodan Milosevic could not have been accomplished without the vast majority of coalition troops, air strikes and logistical support provided by the United States. In fact, France went to great lengths to have America commit our sons and daughters for this moral purpose, and we dutifully obliged.

I am quite sure that the foreign ministers of France and Germany slept soundly while the bombs fell on Kosovo without United Nations approval. However, the historically peaceful people of France are now roused to defend the sacred honor of the Security Council, the very same Security Council whose honor they flouted just five years ago. Convenience, not principle, seems to be France's guiding compass. Your constant opposition to America's effort to remove a regime that has continually violated several, if not all of the human rights provisions within the United Nations charter and presents an increasing threat to democracies all over the world is nothing short of appalling. The dictatorship in Iraq far surpasses the practice of